

for those who have fallen into error, for those whose folly has brought them into trouble, for those who suffer adversities, for those who are imperfect, for those who are deformed, for those who are sick, for those who die? Can you by any hocus-pocus of reasoning and horned logic fit all the dogmas of any of the old creeds to such a love?

Now the mother love, as we know it, or think we know it, must of necessity be greatly modified by that element of *infinite wisdom* which on account of human limitations it does not possess. The love of an earthly mother may be short sighted, and lead her to do for a child's present comfort what eventually would not be good for that child, what might indeed bring to that child ultimate trouble and disaster. Do we not see innumerable illustrations of this shortsightedness of parental love? Do we not see fathers and mothers indulging their children in ways which cannot but bring ultimate trouble and distress to them? Now the Infinite Love cannot and does not make that mistake, and that is precisely the reason it is so often and so much misunderstood. The Infinite Love cannot possibly be harmfully indulgent. It cannot but minister the full measure of chastening, even sore chastening, even terrible severity, which is required to save the object of it from a worse fate, required also to develop the kind of character which will issue in endless prosperity and happiness. If we only knew what it is to be saved, if we only knew what eternal life means, we might perhaps, in a measure comprehend how much Infinite Love will do to save us, how much it will do to *fit* us for eternal life. Give to the divine punishments the reformatory purpose which the Bible as well as the analogies of nature every where and always teach that they possess, and who can tell what measure of severity would be justified? Certainly as much would be justified as would be needed in each and every individual case, and we do not know how much that is.

Oh how much better it is to yield to the *persuasion* of Love than to yield to its severity, its chastening. And why should we needlessly provoke the rod? Sweet submission to the Father's will is the short road to heavenly felicity.

OPTIMISM vs PESSIMISM

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The terms of my caption denote the prospect of success or failure in any scheme or plan, or enterprise, but for my present purpose I want to apply them only to the revealed plan of God for the present age; will it succeed or fail in saving the world by grace? Optimists believe it will succeed. Pessimists believe it will fail. The writer belongs to the latter class.

Some one has said, "No pessimist ever knew God." Let me reply by saying No optimist ever knew the *Word* of God. This is my proposition for this paper. I shall not speculate upon the signs of the

times, tho they are very significant, but shall confine myself to the text of revealed truth, i. e. the teachings of the prophets of Jesus, and of the apostles.

First let me observe that all the glowing promises and prospects of which the prophets wrote apply only to Israel as a people, to the seed of Abraham and not in a single instance to the Gentile church or Gentile times. God made an everlasting covenant with Abraham. He said:

I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting possession to be a God unto thee. And I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. Gen. 17: 7, 8.

The reader will observe that there are no conditions to the promise of God to Abraham consequently his seed could not forfeit it by any misconduct they might be guilty of. Paul recognizes this fact and emphasizes it in Romans 11: 26 29 thus:

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sakes; but as concerning the election they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gift and calling of God is without repentance.

That is, God will not change his mind and plans (Paul means to say) but will fulfil his promises made to the fathers, (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), by finally giving the land to Israel, forgive their sins and make them the dominant nation of the earth, with Christ the Lord upon the throne of David ruling in righteousness over the whole earth. This is what the Hebrew prophets saw and wrote about as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Suffer one reference on this point.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; in those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all the languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you. Zech. 8: 23.

Such a time has never been yet since the prophet wrote, hence it is yet in the future, if God's word can at all be relied on.

Now that the Jews are writhing under the judgement of God, who has permitted them to be scattered to the four winds because of the rejection of their promised Messiah, and the Gentiles have for a time become the favored people of God, the wiseacres and optimists of our day ignore the fact that the promise of God to the fathers, was only to the seed of Abraham and *not* to the nations of the earth, and claim for the Gentile world what is promised to the Jews only. Why are they a separate people today after a thousand years of opportunity to amalgamate with the Gentiles?

Jesus foresaw the day of Gentile vanity and put a quietus upon it by saying,

Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Luke 21: 24.

Will some of our optimistic friends please

tell us what Jesus means by saying "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." If he had expected the Gentile millennium that our optimists expect, would he not have said, Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles forever, and the Gentiles shall become the regenerating force of the whole earth. But notwithstanding the clear cut, pointed statement, or prediction of the Lord from heaven, that the times of the Gentiles shall end, be fulfilled, be completed, the optimists of our day still persist to say, Behold, what our hands have wrought, what our genius has developed, what our enterprise has accomplished; the suffering our humanity has alleviated, how our culture and education has elevated society; why at this rate we will go right on and take "the world for Christ," and lay her at his feet, saved and sanctified by grace divine. Poor, puny man how his head swells when God shows him a little favor. How history repeats itself; the Jews thought the same thing in the zenith of their glory.

In the parable of the tares Jesus sets forth very clearly what the conditions of things will be at the end of this age. He says:

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Matt. 13: 38 43.

Optimists are going to save the angels the unpleasant task of gathering out them that offend, and them that do iniquity and burning them by having all men saved before the end of the world comes. It is rather strange that Jesus did not foresee the marvelous work they are going to accomplish; but then optimists have no difficulty in crediting such trifling? oversights to their Lord and Master. He must simply have failed to properly estimate the work they are going to do.

In another parable Jesus says:

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 13, 47 50.

Is it not rather remarkable that Jesus should take the pains to give two parables to illustrate a condition of things that will never be realized? Now let us go from the parables to a plain pointed statement of facts in Luke 17: 26 30.

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the Ark